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ABSTRACT

Monographs produced on the basis of two and a half years of research at The Demonstration Center for Language Handicapped Children are collected. The monographs address the following topics: a generalized evaluation model for language disability programs; the impact of the language center program on the individual child as determined from critical incidence reports; the role of the language center teacher aide based on the perceptions of teachers; perceptions of classroom teachers concerning selected aspects of the language center program; administrative attitudes toward the program of the language center after 1 year of operation; the relationship of special instructional programs to student attendnace; and proficiency profiles for professionals who work with LH children. (GW)

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DEMONSTRATION CENTER FOR LANGUAGE-HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

A GENERALIZED EVALUATION MODEL FOR LANGUAGE DISABILITY PROGRAMS

by Max D. Miller, Ed.D.

Two vital components in the establishment of programs for language-handicapped children are those of evaluation and research. Evaluation involves the process of accumulating and analyzing data which will enhance educational decision making. Research involves the development and control of experimental variables for the purpose of clarifying choices between logical alternatives.

Evaluation and research in language-handicap programs enables administrators to answer questions concerning the effectiveness of established programs and to ascertain new directions and goals. In addition, administrators are able to supply new information on how the needs of language-handicapped children can be met.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Preplanning a program with evaluation as a major concern will result in definitive answers to important questions. There are basically three steps in evaluation which should be considered prior to the establishment of a program for language-handicapped children.

State the Objectives of the Program

The statement of objectives should define the goals of the project so there is no misunderstanding concerning intent or expectations. Objectives can also give direction in terms of staff development and instructional procedures. Objectives stated in observable and measurable terms should provide guidance for personnel responsible for data collection and analysis. Examples of objectives useful in programs for language-handicapped children are as follows:

1) Students entering the program for the first time will improve significantly ($p < .05$) their performance in language skill areas as measured by *The Stanford Achievement Test* given at the beginning of the year and again at the end of the year.
2) At the end of the academic year, eighty percent of the students in the second year program will exhibit positive attitudes toward school, as measured by the *School Sentiment Index*, by answering 20 of the 40 questions positively.

Evaluation of objectives should involve analysis of scores derived from testing students using standardized and project-made tests. In addition to providing direction in purchasing and development of tests, the objectives should give general guidelines for administration, scoring, and analysis of test data.

Objectives should have at least the three basic components listed below.

Behavior. A statement of expected behaviors should be as explicit as practicable. In the examples presented above, the behaviors indicated are "improve their performance" and "exhibit positive attitudes."

Conditions. A statement of conditions should include the persons involved and the time frame considered. In the examples cited above, the objectives were designed for students and for a stated time period.

Criteria of success. Guidelines should indicate what cutoff point will be established for successful accomplish-

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ment of the objectives. In the first examples, a significant ($p < .05$) improvement in terms of pretest and posttest differences was established as the criterion of success. Eighty percent of the students responding positively to a project-developed instrument was *a priori* established as the criterion of success for the second objective cited.

Delineate the Specific Techniques and Procedures by which the Objectives are Expected to be Achieved

Included in this second evaluation step are several elements, e.g., designation of teaching techniques, motivation techniques, instructional materials, etc.

Examples of techniques and procedures typical of language programs are as follows:

Specification of educational planning sequence. Educational planning should be viewed as a developmental process involving the continuous modification of instructional goals and performance objectives. The sequence of educational planning should be specified in order to fully utilize evaluation techniques. One method of accomplishing this is to set short term objectives and evaluate the appropriateness of the instructional activities at specified times.

Performance objectives. Performance objectives stated in measurable terms focus on the consequence of instructional activities. The specification of objectives provides the means to determine what improvement has taken place, how much improvement occurred, and how long the improvement required.

Determine Appropriate Evaluation Measures and Feedback Mechanisms to Assess Outcomes in Terms of Stated Objectives

For the most part, this third evaluation step is predetermined by the program's objectives and design. An evaluation design appropriate to objectives should contain at least the following elements.

Identification of the problem. A problem is typically stated in the form of a question which leads to the formulation of a hypothesis.

Formulation of a hypothesis. A hypothesis should be stated if it is appropriate to the objective. Some objectives may be such that experimental analysis is not necessary.

Determination of research design. A design involves selection of subjects and formulation of dependent (criterion) and independent variables. Typically subjects are selected by a random procedure and separated into control and experimental groups. The two groups are then compared to see if the independent variable caused the experimental group to differ from the control group. A simple paradigm illustrating a useful experimental design is presented in Figure 1.

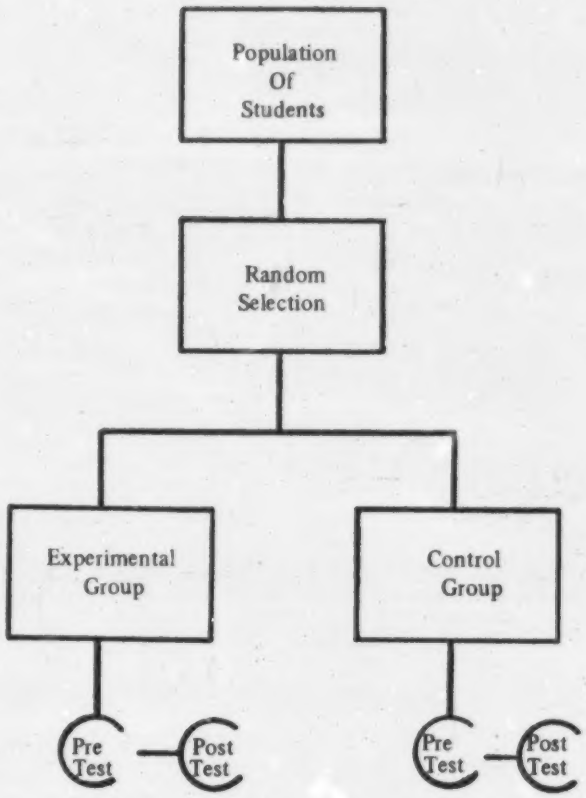

Figure 1
Representation of an Evaluation Design

Data collection. A procedure for collecting the data should be stated and an appropriate statistical procedure chosen. How data are collected will be determined by the type of statistical analysis planned.

Statement of a level of confidence. A significance level of .05 or .01 is typically set in order to determine whether group differences are the function of chance variation or of experimental manipulation.

AN EVALUATION DESIGN

An explanation of an evaluation design applicable to a program for language-handicapped children follows. Four independent variables were identified which might have an effect on the academic progress of the language-handicapped child. The variables are instructional program, appraisal type, grade level, and paraprofessional support.

Academic achievement was defined as change scores based on pretest/posttest differences on certain subscales of *The Stanford Achievement Test*. In each instance the dependent measure was a product of a child who was previously diagnosed as possessing a language handicap.

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The research design had internal controls which included both language-handicapped children not identified to the teacher, and children who did not have a language handicap. As external controls were classes where no special training took place.

Within the practical limitations of working within a functioning school system, student and school selection was carried out using a random selection procedure. This resulted in a minimization of selection bias and produced data that was of a quality usable in statistical analysis. The primary statistical technique used to test null hypotheses of no difference was analysis of variance. Figure 2 illustrates an idealization of the experimental design.

Summary

Research and evaluation must parallel the development of innovative educational programs designed for language-handicapped children. Educational decision making is enhanced by the accumulation and analysis of quantifiable data since quantification enables empirically-based choices between instructional alternatives. This enhancement is especially critical in innovative educational programs.

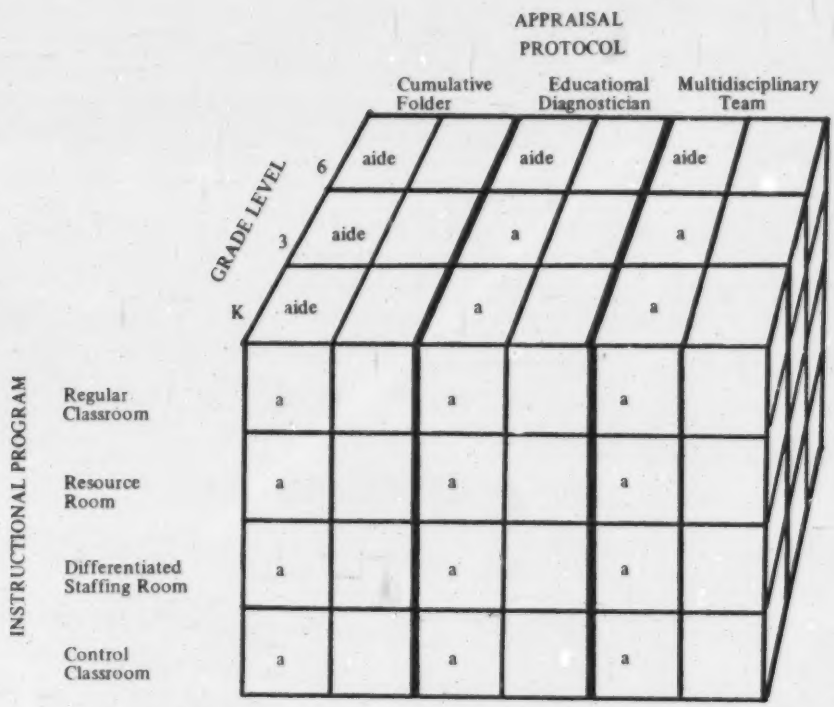

Figure 2
Idealized Design Model
for Language Center Projects

This project was funded through
the Division of Special Education,
Texas Education Agency.

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DEMONSTRATION CENTER FOR
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IMPACT OF THE LANGUAGE CENTER PROGRAM ON THE INDIVIDUAL CHILD AS DETERMINED FROM CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORTS

by Ralph O. Teter, Ed.D.

One aspect of a statistical research study that is often lost is the impact of the intervention upon the individual child. Particularly elusive is the measurement, during a short time period of one year, of affective changes.

Procedures

During the first year of the Language Center project, classroom teachers, resource teachers, and educational diagnosticians were asked to submit "Critical Incident Reports" on children in whom they observed a distinct change as a result of the program. This report included:

. . A brief description of the behavioral change.

. . Possible causes of the observed change.

These reports were submitted voluntarily throughout the year by observers. No conscious pressures were exerted on their submission. The reports were analyzed in terms of grade level, domain (cognitive, affective, psychomotor) in which the change was observed, and inferred reasons for change. In some cases the changes observed for a child were in more than one domain and attributable to more than one cause.

Results

Of the 492 students in first-year intervention programs, Critical Incident Reports were submitted on 47 students, or 9.6 percent. Results of the study are presented in two ways:

. . A summary tabulation of data.

. . Excerpts from Critical Incident Reports.

Areas of change. Data on the domains in which change was noted are given by grade level in Table 1.

Table 1

DOMAINS OF OBSERVED CHANGE

Grade Level	Cognitive	Affective	Psychomotor
K	3	11	4
3	4	19	4
6	4	5	0
TOTAL	11	35	8

Most changes (64.8%) were noted in the affective domain. The third grade accounted for more than half (54.3%) of these affective changes; kindergarten contributed 31.4%. Critical changes in psychomotor activities were identified exclusively at the kindergarten and third grade levels. The sixth grade recorded the highest percentage (44.4) of cognitive change responses.

Inferred causes of change. Table 2 summarizes observers' inferred causes of student change.

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Table 2

INFERRED CAUSES OF OBSERVED CHANGES

Grade Level	Individualization	Attainment of success	Equipment	Materials	Methods	Others
K	6	2	3	7	4	5
3	3	4	2	3	12	4
6	1	0	1	3	1	2
TOTAL	10	6	6	13	17	11

Causal categories were derived from an analysis of the reports. The causes identified in order of total responses were:

- . . Methods of instruction (27.0%)
- . . Instructional materials (20.6%)
- . . Individualization of instruction (15.9%)
- . . Attainment of success (9.5%)
- . . Supportive equipment (9.5%)
- . . Other reasons, including parent support, availability of diagnostic information, peer group help.

As for grade differences, the categories of materials, individualization, and equipment were of greatest significance at the kindergarten level. At the third grade, method of instruction and the attainment of success were most notable. Instructional materials contributed most to observable changes at the sixth grade.

Excerpts from Critical Incident Reports. Table 3 presents verbatim excerpts from Critical Incident Reports.

Conclusions

Procedures such as the Critical Incident Report, which call for noting in writing significant changes in observed behaviors of students, were of value in determining the impact of interventions on individual students. The results obtained in identifying reasons for such changes were compatible with findings utilizing other approaches. The reports obtained in this study indicate that significant impact was made by project interventions, particularly in the affective area of attitude toward school and learning.

Table 3

EXCERPTS FROM CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORTS

Initial Behavior	Behavior Following Language Center Intervention	Factors Contributing to Change
When Tommy, a nonreader, enrolled at the beginning of school, he rarely opened his mouth to talk. He flatly refused to participate in any classroom activity be it writing, math, art or music. (Third grade)	After a period of time in the resource room, he has shown evidence of emerging from this shell. It has been noted that he now chats with his classmates. He even has begun to participate in writing and some math activities. His enthusiasm for attending the resource room is revealed by begging his teachers to let him go at times other than that assigned to him. He cannot tell time, but has learned where the clock hands should be when it is time for the resource room. He needs no reminders and is rarely late. His progress is gradual, but it is evident that in a few short weeks he is becoming part of the school.	His progress may be due to the use of praise. Every time he participates, a favorable comment is made. He is enthralled with the books and materials provided. He takes these back to the classroom and retells the stories in his own words on tape.
Esther joined the project after five weeks of school. She had not spoken a word in that situation since school began. At the end of a testing session the teacher discovered the test had not been attempted. (Third grade)	After one week in the project, she was participating in group activities and attempting all instructional work. Last week she volunteered to stand before thirty children and read an experience chart and she accomplished this feat with 100% accuracy.	She was allowed to achieve some success in a very small group situation. As she began to feel more confident, the large group no longer frightened her.

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TABLE 3 (Cont.)

Initial Behavior	Behavior Following Language Center Intervention	Factors Contributing to Change
Yvonne was a discipline problem in the regular classroom. She worked only when she was in the mood to do so. Her facial expression was nearly always one of anger or resentment. (Kindergarten)	In the resource room, in small group work, she has seemed happy. She smiles more often and is nicer to her peers.	An environment where most of her experiences are successful ones have helped change her attitude. Individualizing instruction, rather than having her work in a large group situation, seems to have helped.
Giltner came to us unable to read a word and firmly believing he was incapable of ever learning. He had never been retained and his learning problem had been attributed to a lazy eye condition. He related that he hated school. He was habitually absent on Monday and Friday. (Third grade)	He began working with special language materials and during the first week learned to read an entire chart. He smiled and remarked, "I can read, I can really read." Since that day he has not missed a day of school and is voluntarily remaining after school to assist in cleaning the room.	The special materials gave him instant success and served to motivate him.
Steve was a rather quiet child when he first entered school. He entered the resource room with no calendar concepts. (Kindergarten)	To this date he has learned to tell stories from pictures and express himself with a great deal of enthusiasm. He has become a leader in activities. He now can tell the days of the week, the name of the current month and will announce the next day of the week.	The total school situation apparently has aided his development. Part of his enthusiasm for learning can be attributed to language materials.
Glenn was a language-handicapped child who had not achieved success in the classroom. (Third grade)	He remarked, "Glory hallelujah and praise the Lord, I guess I am happy I'm in this room. In my other room they said, 'Get out your books and papers, put up your books and papers' all day long and over here we get to work with machines and do all kinds of things."	The activities were new and different for this child. He was motivated by active involvement.
Jack could not use the "L" sound as the initial sound in words. He could produce the sound in isolation, but left if off words. (Third grade)	The desired production of the word was recorded with his production following. When the recording was played, he realized that he was not saying the same thing. He was surprised and was then able to add the "L" sound to the word "little".	Individual attention and use of the tape recorder contributed to the change.
When Lillie arrived in the room she refused to take a part in any activities or to answer any questions or respond to anything or anybody, including the other children. (Kindergarten)	In the past two days she has come in talking. She even called me by name, while before she always called me "teacher".	She began working with an audio-reader and she talked to it readily. She liked the sound of her voice when she played it back and also liked the independence of working the machine by herself.
Danny had simply been a "nothing" in the classroom. (Sixth grade)	He is in charge of setting up the equipment and getting everything ready for the group to view the lesson. His own self-esteem has been elevated as he realizes that he is needed by the group and by me.	The change is a result of responsibility being assigned to him.

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TABLE 3 (Cont.)

Initial Behavior	Behavior Following Language Center Intervention	Factors Contributing to Change
According to David's parents, he did not like school last year and in the mornings protested having to go to school. (Third grade)	This year, his parents stated, he likes school and always looks forward to going. They attribute his change in attitude to his visits to the resource room.	He gets positive reinforcement in the resource room.
Becky's written performance indicated poor spatial organization and kinesthetic performance. (Third grade)	She has now learned to write in cursive all the letters of the alphabet. Her teacher has praised her for her most recent handwriting papers.	Becky has gained confidence in herself since the beginning of the year.
Don had been an extreme discipline problem in the classroom. He would not do his classwork or anything his teacher asked him. (Third grade)	I became convinced that he could do much better work than he demonstrated in his classroom. All he wanted to do was be a jazz singer like Daddy. "And you don't have to read or study to do that." I explained that math is involved in time signatures, and reading is involved since you have to read the words to the music. He looked at me and said, "I didn't know that!"	Since then his interest in reading has increased. He now tries and wants to learn to read.
The day Cody entered the program he related that he was unable to read. (Third grade)	Last week the children were asked to draw a picture depicting something they had learned during the week. His was a picture of a book and written across the top was, "I have learned to read".	Just hard work on skills and self-image.
When Chris began third grade he was a discipline problem. He was uninterested in any school work and just didn't care. (Third grade)	Last week I began a goals chart in the resource room. The children got a star for each objective accomplished. Chris uses good manners and works quietly in the resource room and classroom without disturbing others.	The children signed a contract to try and earn all 50 stars by May. I think this gave him the incentive he needed to discipline himself to do his school work.
When school began, Bruce's attitude was completely negative. As an example, if a child tripped, he would mumble, "I hope you break your leg." (Third grade)	His entire attitude has changed. His favorite expression is, "Oh fine!" He does everything cheerfully and seems to really like school. He is extremely anxious to learn new things in the classroom as well as the resource room.	His success in the small groups has helped his self-image.
Gary has been a behavioral problem since he began school. During the past two years he has received corporal punishment on the average of three times per week. He was reversing the numeral "2". When he entered the project he did not even understand the rationale of rote counting. (Third grade)	Two weeks after school began, personnel were remarking about his behavioral change. The teacher worked diligently with him on writing the numeral "2" and when he finally wrote it correctly he began crying and remarked, "I knew I was making it all wrong but nobody ever showed me how to do it right." His family had talked of moving and he said, "If I have to move out of this room I'm going to quit school because I just can't go into one of those rooms."	This change can possibly be accredited to the fact that he began to experience some academic success.

This project was funded through the Division of Special Education, Texas Education Agency.

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DEMONSTRATION CENTER FOR LANGUAGE-HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

THE ROLE OF THE LANGUAGE CENTER TEACHER AIDE BASED ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS

by Ralph Teter, Ed.D.

One of the objectives of The Language Center was to test different classroom organizational patterns as they relate to teaching the language-handicapped child. Two organizational patterns which used teacher aides were considered in this study: (1) the self-contained classroom, in which four identified language-handicapped children were intermixed with 25-30 other students; and (2) the resource room, in which 24 students from several classrooms spent approximately one hour per day with a resource teacher using special materials. The first organizational pattern was known as Instructional Program A and the second as Instructional Program B. Teacher aides were utilized in half the rooms in each program. These two instructional programs were conducted at kindergarten, third grade, and sixth grade.

Problem

This study was directed toward an analysis of the role of teacher aides as they served language-handicapped children in the classroom and the resource room. Several secondary topics were delineated:

- . . To determine teacher aide involvement in classroom or resource room activities.
- . . To determine teacher aide involvement by subject area.
- . . To determine teacher aide involvement with various sized groups.
- . . To determine teacher aide involvement with project and nonproject students.

Method

Based on a study of the literature and individual contacts with principals, teachers, and aides, a questionnaire was developed which included the following topics:

- . . Specific types of activities the teacher aide performs.
- . . Subject areas of involvement (through preparation for or direct contact in a given subject).
- . . Group size (number of pupils in groups with which the aide works).
- . . Involvement with project students (as distinguished from nonproject students).

Identical questionnaires were distributed to teachers in late April to indicate the time the teacher aides spent in each specified category during a typical one-week period.

Results

The results of the study are presented by grade level and by instructional program. Within each are presented teacher aide involvement (recorded as a percentage of their work week) in classroom and resource room activities, by subject areas, with various group sizes, and with project and nonproject students.

Classroom and resource room activities. Teacher aide involvement in classroom and resource room activities was classified into four categories: instruction, materials, clerical-housekeeping, and child care. Results are given in Table 1.

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TABLE 1

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES OF TEACHER AIDES
(Percent of Time Involvement)

Activity	Grade Level		
	Kindergarten	Third	Sixth
Instruction	33%	59%	51%
Materials	40	16	17
Clerical-Housekeeping	14	22	32
Child Care	13	3	0

Activity	Instructional Program	
	Classroom (A)	Resource Room (B)
Instruction	52%	42%
Materials	17	40
Clerical-Housekeeping	24	16
Child Care	7	2

Twenty-eight separate activities were identified on the questionnaire. The five most commonly identified activities for each grade level and instructional program are given in Table 2.

TABLE 2

MOST COMMON ACTIVITIES OF TEACHER AIDES
BY GRADE LEVEL AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Activity
Kindergarten
Preparing instructional materials
Supervising study groups
Drill and practice routines
Preparing bulletin boards
Supervising playground activities
Third Grade
Supervising study groups
Assisting the teacher with seatwork activities
Keeping files of children's work
Reading or telling stories
Arranging materials for lessons
Sixth Grade
Supervising study groups
Typing or duplicating instructional materials
Recording grades
Assisting the teacher with seatwork activities
Scoring objective tests
Classroom (Instructional Program A)
Supervising study groups
Drill and practice routines
Typing or duplicating instructional materials
Recording grades
Assisting the teacher with seatwork activities
Resource Room (Instructional Program B)
Supervising study groups
Preparing bulletin boards
Keeping files of children's work
Preparing instructional materials
Setting up or operating instructional equipment

The following results were based upon analysis of data from the questionnaires:

- Across all grade levels, teacher aide participation in instructional activities constituted approximately 40% of their time.
- Involvement in either the preparation or the collection of instructional materials represented about 20% of teacher aide time.
- Involvement in activities directly related to teaching (instruction and materials) represented approximately 70% of aide time at each grade level.
- Teacher aide involvement in instructional activities was approximately the same in both Instructional Program A (classroom) and Instructional Program B (resource room).
- Teacher aides in the resource room devoted proportionately more of their time to the preparation of instructional materials than did the classroom teacher aides.
- Resource room aides spent less time in clerical-housekeeping chores and child-care activities.
- Time involved in child-care activities decreased as grade level increased.
- Clerical-housekeeping chores increased as grade level increased.

Involvement by Subject Area. A determination was made of teacher aide involvement by subject areas identified in the operational definition of language disabilities. These subjects were:

- Reading (including readiness and English)
- Spelling
- Writing
- Arithmetic

Other subject areas were not specifically identified, but were grouped under "other subjects." These data are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3

SUBJECT AREA INVOLVEMENT BY TEACHER AIDES
(Percent of Time)

Subject Area	Grade Level		
	Kindergarten	Third	Sixth
Reading (including readiness, English)	54%	43%	65%
Spelling	0	14	28
Writing	0	13	2
Arithmetic	3	17	1
Other Subjects	43	13	4

Subject Area	Instructional Program	
	Classroom (A)	Resource Room (B)
Reading (including readiness, English)	39%	70%
Spelling	18	9
Writing	7	6
Arithmetic	9	8
Other Subjects	27	7

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The following results were noted:

- Teacher aides in the resource room spent more of their time in reading and reading related activities (70%) than did the classroom aides (39%).
- Summation of time on the subjects included in the operational definition of language disability (reading, spelling, writing, and arithmetic) indicated increased involvement in these areas from the kindergarten (57%), through the third grade (87%), to the sixth grade (96%).
- At the kindergarten and third grade levels, approximately one-half the aide's time was spent in either readiness or reading activities.
- At the sixth grade approximately two-thirds of the aide's time was involved in reading or English activities.

Involvement by Group Size. Respondents were asked to indicate the size of the group with which the aides usually work. The results, based upon time in direct contact with children, are shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4

GROUP SIZE AND TEACHER AIDE INVOLVEMENT
(Percent of Time)

Group Size	Grade Level Kindergarten	Third	Sixth
Tutorial (1)	7%	20%	22%
2 to 4	21	35	21
5 to 12	3	25	17
13 or more	69	20	40

Group Size	Instructional Program Classroom (A)	Resource Room (B)
Tutorial (1)	21%	7%
2 to 4	26	76
5 to 12	17	17
13 or more	36	0

The following points were noted:

- Teacher aides in the classroom devoted approximately three times as much of their time to tutorial situations as did the resource room aides.
- Time involved in tutorial instruction by teacher aides increased by grade level from the kindergarten level (7%), to the third grade (15%), to the sixth grade (22%).

Involvement with project students. Use of teacher aides was not restricted to working with language-handicapped children. Respondents were asked to indicate the time spent with project, nonproject, and mixed groups of children. The data are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5

PROJECT STUDENTS AND TEACHER AIDE INVOLVEMENT
(Percent of time)

Student Category	Grade Level Kindergarten	Third	Sixth
Project Students only	51%	50%	6%
Mixed Group	45	25	45
Nonproject Students Only	4	25	1

Student Category	Instructional Program Classroom (A)	Resource Room (B)
Project Students only	38%	100%
Mixed Group	50	0
Nonproject Students only	12	0

The following results were noted:

- Aides in the regular classroom served all children in the classroom, whether they were project or nonproject students.
- Approximately half the aide's time was spent in groups involving nonproject students.

Subjective Evaluations by Teachers

The questionnaire provided an opportunity for an open-ended response by each teacher to the following: "Give a statement of your feelings, positive and/or negative, about the value and utilization of a teacher aide in your classroom as a result of your experiences this year." These comments were analyzed and classified as *positive*, *neutral*, or *negative*. A comment was classified as *neutral* if it had any element that was negative, regardless of the number of positive elements in the statement. The results are presented in Table 7.

TABLE 7

ANALYSIS OF COMMENTS BY TEACHERS ON AIDE UTILIZATION

	Number of Respondents	Comments Positive	Neutral	Negative
Kindergarten	4	3	1	0
Third Grade	9	16	3	0
Sixth Grade	5	3	2	0
Instructional Program A	14	9	5	0
Instructional Program B	4	3	1	0
Total	18	12	6	0

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Some examples of the most frequent comments (similar statement in at least three responses) are indicated below:

- . . The aide enabled many children to have the individual and/or extra help they might not have received otherwise.
- . . We could have accomplished more if we could have had an aide all day.
- . . Using the aide to make instructional materials, take care of bulletin boards, and set up equipment has freed me for planning, reading, studying, and evaluating both my program and the children.
- . . The room has too many children and is too small for two adult voices. (This was the only negative comment that appeared more than once--it occurred twice).
- . . The aide was excellent with children.
- . . I have been able to do twice as much with my students this year.

Conclusions

The role of the teacher aide is to provide support for the teacher in a number of areas. The tasks assigned to an aide depend upon the professional judgment of the teacher, but several tendencies may be noted.

Teacher aides at all grade levels spent almost three-fourths of their time in activities directly related to teaching. Aides in resource rooms were more extensively involved in these activities. Specifically, the more commonly identified activities were:

- . . Supervising study groups
- . . Drill and practice routines
- . . Assisting the teacher with seatwork activities
- . . Preparing instructional materials
- . . Preparing bulletin boards

Involvement in clerical-housekeeping chores was more prevalent at the sixth grade, consuming almost one-third of the aide's time. The most commonly identified activities were:

- . . Typing or duplicating instructional materials
- . . Recording grades

Aides served small groups of children, four or less, about half the time at the third and sixth grades. All children, project and nonproject, had access to aide assistance. Teacher judgments concerning the utilization of aides pointed to significant involvement in reading and reading related activities.

Comments by teachers tended to support the tenet that aides do have an impact on instructional practices, particularly as related to individualization of instruction. The presence of the aide permitted the teacher to provide intensive instruction to small groups while the aide supervised or gave drill and practice routines to other students.

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DEMONSTRATION CENTER FOR LANGUAGE-HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

PERCEPTIONS OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS CONCERNING SELECTED ASPECTS OF THE LANGUAGE CENTER PROGRAM

by Ralph O. Teter, Ed.D.

Day-to-day contact by Language Center staff with teachers provided a valuable means of monitoring the first year's program. Comments by these teachers, both solicited and unsolicited, provided continuing input for program assessment and modification.

Problem

A need existed for a written assessment of selected aspects of the Language Center project. Such an assessment should include classroom teacher perceptions of the first year of operation.

Method

A questionnaire assessing seven aspects of the program was prepared to cover the following:

- Overall feeling toward the project.
- Ability to utilize the information gained through the project to identify other language-handicapped children in the classroom.
- The value of appraisal information provided by:
  - The cumulative folder.
  - The educational diagnostician.
  - The multi-disciplinary team.
- The adequateness and appropriateness of materials and equipment.
- Changes in teaching style as a result of the Language Center program.
- Activities and contributions of the teacher aide (asked only of those teachers with aides).

All but one of the questions called for a scalar response. Scale values ranged from 1 (lowest level) to 5 (highest). In addition, teacher comments on the Language Center program were requested. The questionnaire was submitted to all Instructional Program A (classroom without resource room support) teachers in the participating school districts two weeks prior to the close of school. Responses were received from 35 of the 36 teachers.

Results

For purposes of analysis, scale responses "1" and "2" were categorized into a negative group, "3" into a medial group, and "4" and "5" into a positive group. These were then expressed in terms of a positive assessment ratio of those with positive feelings to the total of positive and negative responses. Results are presented in Table 1.

The one teacher who responded negatively in terms of ability to identify other language-handicapped children had a class in which four project students were assigned to a "high-regular" class.

The hypothesis of no significant differences among the sources of appraisal information was tested using the *z*-test for the difference between two proportions. The value of appraisal information provided by the educational diagnostician was found to be significant at the .01 level when compared with other sources of appraisal information.

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TABLE I

PERCEPTIONS OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS CONCERNING SELECTED ASPECTS OF THE LANGUAGE CENTER PROGRAM

Program Aspects	Teacher Perceptions Positive	Medial	Negative	Positive Assessment Ratio
	%	%	%	
Overall feeling toward project	52	39	9	0.85
Value of appraisal information provided by:				
Cumulative folder	0	40	60	.00
Educational diagnostician	84	8	8	.91
Multi-disciplinary team	20	40	40	.33
Materials and equipment in terms of:				
Adequateness	94	6	0	1.00
Appropriateness	91	9	0	1.00
Changes in teaching style	55	36	9	.86
Ability to identify other language-handicapped children	97	0	3	.97
Value of aide involvement in:				
Instruction	55	17	28	.66
Materials	66	27	7	.90
Clerical support	65	14	21	.76
Child care	54	13	33	.62
Contribution of aide to children's academic progress	67	13	20	.77

Conclusions

As a result of this survey of perceptions of classroom teachers concerning selected aspects of the Language Center project, the following conclusions may be noted:

- A high proportion of the participants had strong, positive feelings concerning the Language Center project during its first year of operation.
- Appraisal information provided by the educational diagnostician contributed significantly more information than the multi-disciplinary team approach. The cumulative folder alone provided no additional information.
- The materials and equipment provided through The Language Center were both adequate and appropriate.
- A high proportion of teachers perceived changes in their teaching style as a result of the Language Center project.
- Participants were able to identify other children with language disabilities in their classroom.
- Teacher aides were utilized to support different types of classroom activities and were perceived as contributing to student academic progress.

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DEMONSTRATION CENTER FOR LANGUAGE-HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

ADMINISTRATIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD THE PROGRAM OF THE LANGUAGE CENTER AFTER ONE YEAR OF OPERATION

by Joe A. Airola, Ed.D.

Background

The Language Center conducted its research in the Aldine and Spring Independent School Districts. The various organizational patterns under study were randomly assigned to schools in these districts at the beginning of the project. One district had 12 elementary schools and four junior high schools; the other had three elementary schools and two junior high schools. The elementary schools in both districts taught kindergarten through grade five; the junior highs, grade six through eight.

A sample of administrators from the two districts was drawn in order to survey attitudes toward the Language Center concerning:

1. Overall operation of the program during the past year.
2. Effects on the children in the experimental program, children not in the experimental program, faculty in the experimental program, and faculty not in the experimental program.
3. Effectiveness of the instructional program and Language Center personnel.
4. Suggested improvements in the project for next year.

Data Collection

Data were collected by means of a structured personal interview with all 21 building principals. The interview schedule contained eighteen questions prepared from the topic areas listed above and was formulated to be flexible enough to record information not anticipated.

Interviews were conducted in the principals' offices. Data are presented below in both narrative and tabular form.

Results

The first question concerned the principals' general feeling about The Language Center. In every instance the response was highly positive. Sample comments were:

"The program has been most helpful."

"Sold on it - - can see its worth."

"Has been responsible for helping my teachers become more aware of individual problems."

"We can do better next year because of the experience."

"Good for children."

"The program has helped us to identify needs."

In response to Question 2, "In your opinion, what is the feeling of your faculty toward the project?," all respondents indicated that the faculty in the grade levels involved had positive attitudes for the most part. Some of the comments which were less than positive were:

"Only problem was caused by the fact that the resource teacher was not here every day since we share with another building."

"Teachers have mixed emotions - - they feel that it is difficult to provide for needs in the regular class."

"Initially the teachers felt overwhelmed - - especially those that have been here for a while because of the additional assistance and help available."

"Some negative feeling because of the additional work involved for the regular teacher; however, the specific teachers involved were very enthusiastic."

Question 3 was designed to determine which elements were most successful in implementing this project in the schools. The following were mentioned:

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Preschool inservice.
Continued inservice.
Supervision by the Language Center staff.
The selection of the resource teachers.
Helping teachers become more aware of individual needs of the children.
Positive attitude of the district administration.
Availability of media and materials.
Stress on independent activities and use of media by children.

In response to Question 4, "What do you feel was the greatest problem in implementing the project in your school this year?," the following statements were made:

"Materials and equipment were late in arriving."
"No major problems."
"Regular teachers feel perhaps that they have had to spend too much time with children diagnosed as having a language deficiency."
"Selection of children to be included in the project was a little bit late for a smooth start."
"Getting a great degree of teacher involvement."
"Regular teachers had difficulty determining the instructional level for each child who had been identified."
One respondent indicated that the principal should be in on the hiring of the resource teacher and that Region IV Education Service Center should work more closely with the principal.

Question 5 was designed to determine what effect this project had on teachers in grade levels not included in the study. Results were:

	Negligible	Some	Substantial
Classroom teacher without resource teacher support	4	1	2
Classroom teacher with resource teacher support	3	2	3

Question 6 asked if the resource teacher had been used by teachers in other grades for inservice, consultation, and sharing. Responses were: Negligible, 1; Some, 2; Substantial, 5.

The frequency of use of materials and equipment furnished by The Language Center and used by grade levels not involved in the project was the subject of Question 7. Responses were:

	Negligible	Some	Substantial
Classroom teachers without resource teacher support	2	2	3
Classroom teacher with resource teacher support	1	2	4

Question 8 asked whether there had been any increased interest (as a result of the project) among the faculty to more appropriately provide for each child's educational needs. Results:

	Negligible	Some	Substantial
Classroom teacher without resource teacher support	2	6	0
Classroom teacher with resource teacher support	2	2	3

Question 9 asked about the effectiveness of the resource teachers. In those schools in which a resource teacher was assigned, the evaluation was uniformly positive. Indications were that the resource teachers were adequately prepared to fulfill their responsibilities and developed a good rapport with teachers.

Question 10 was designed to determine if the principal had noticed any change in the teaching style of the teachers directly involved in the project. Three principals indicated that they had no basis for comparison. Eighteen reported very positive changes. Examples of changes cited were:

Better planning
Better management of classroom situations
More attention to individual needs
Individualization of instruction
Better use of resources
More general concern for the child's needs
More planning

The response to Question 11, concerning the appropriateness of the materials and equipment purchased, was unanimously positive. This was to be expected since principals and teachers were given considerable latitude and allowed to participate in purchasing decisions regarding materials and equipment.

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Question 12 asked if other children besides the project children were helped as a result of the presence of the project in the respondent's building. The results were: No, 2; Do not know, 3; Yes, 16.

One respondent offered the opinion that perhaps the faster children may have been held back in one or two classrooms as a result of emphasizing attention to individual problems. The 16 who gave positive responses cited reasons such as these:

The materials and equipment were available to all the children.

Differentiated materials were used to help other children in the classroom who had problems.

Better planning resulted in better opportunities for all.

Inservice education, resulting in the improvement of the teacher, provided advantages to all children in the class.

The influence of the resource teacher in the building was helpful to many children besides those specifically in the project.

Question 13 investigated appraisal information: "In your opinion, was there any direct relationship between appraisal information acquired and its influence on the instructional program?" In most cases appraisal information did have an influence on the instructional program. According to the comments, this was particularly true in the Protocol II (educational diagnostician support) appraisal area.

Question 14 asked the principal to rate the effectiveness of the educational diagnostician assigned to their school. This question only applied to the schools in which an educational diagnostician was assigned. Results were:

Scale	Number of Responses	Percent
1 (ineffective)	0	0
2	0	0
3	4	31
4 (very effective)	9	69

Question 15 asked the principal to rate aides in terms of whether aides made it possible for teachers to attend more professional tasks. Results were:

Scale	Number of Responses	Percent
1 (ineffective)	0	0
2	0	0
3	2	25
4 (very effective)	6	75

Comments were:

The main reason we are individualizing is because of the aides.

Teachers spend more time planning, and do less clerical work.

Particularly valuable for primary teachers.

Teachers were apprehensive about using aides at first.

Suggested changes in the project for next year were elicited by Question 16. Some of the more significant suggestions were:

Allow more time for the educational diagnostician.

Encourage and allow the resource teacher to spend more time in the regular classroom.

More regular reports on children's progress.

No changes - - extremely well satisfied.

Assign an aide for each teacher.

At the sixth grade level, consider a differentiated team approach as opposed to trying to make the regular teacher take responsibility for working with the language-handicapped children.

Stress in-building staffing to channel all resources to solve the problem.

Improve selection of children next year at the kindergarten level.

Emphasize testing less, particularly at the kindergarten level.

Get regular classroom teachers more involved in the selection and identification of children.

Questions 17 and 18 concerned the extent of parental involvement in the project and the principal's opinion on scheduling a planned program of parental involvement. In most cases, parental involvement was negligible, although several resource teachers did attempt to get parents to visit the resource room during the day. Most principals did not feel a planned program of parental involvement was required. As a matter of fact, several felt it would be detrimental and thought it important that the parent be involved in the total program instead of just one specialized segment.

Conclusions

The interviews indicated that the chief administrator of each of the project schools had a very positive attitude toward the effectiveness of The Language Center during its first year of operation. They felt that the project tended to enhance their efforts in attempting to meet the needs of the language-handicapped child. It was interesting to find that the majority felt many children not included in the experimental program gained because their school was included in the project. Principals noted that the extra materials and equipment helped teachers to differentiate instruction for many children - - not just for the

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experimental group. An analogous feeling was evidenced concerning the faculty not included in the experimental program; there was a "ripoff" effect. In some instances, the total school became involved in seeking ways to more effectively meet the needs of students with learning problems.

The teachers in the experimental program showed evidence of professional growth. Comments cited by the administrators indicated that the project teachers were making greater efforts to individualize instruction, had more interest in diagnosing children's learning problems, had more interest in using differentiated materials, and were adapting to the changing role of the teacher in utilizing support personnel.

The specialized personnel assigned to the schools, the educational diagnosticians and resource teachers, were judged as possessing adequate skills and abilities for the roles to which they were assigned.

A number of recommendations were made regarding ways to improve the program for 1972-73. Among the suggestions under consideration are:

- Availability of an educational diagnostician for all children and teachers of the experimental groups.
- Greater emphasis on the use of the resource teacher by the classroom teacher.
- More extensive use of teacher aides.
- Additional refinement of screening and diagnostic information.

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DEMONSTRATION CENTER FOR LANGUAGE-HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

RELATIONSHIP OF SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS TO STUDENT ATTENDANCE

by Ralph O. Teter, Ed.D.

Most of the research activities of The Language Center focused upon status, change, and trend studies of student achievement as measured by criterion tests. Secondary analyses related to direct measures of student attitude toward self and school. Toward this end, one of the most often utilized unobtrusive measures of student attitude was considered: school attendance. The research design for the project's second year of operation permitted such studies across research and control groups.

Statement of Problem

A basic assumption was made that if the schools are maintaining the child's interest and promoting favorable attitudes toward school, he will attend school more frequently than if the converse is true. The study described in this monograph was designed to determine the relationship between school attendance and programs of special instructional intervention.

Method

In Texas, average daily attendance figures serve as the basis for state financial support to local districts. Since these data are maintained at the highest level of accuracy on each student, they served as measures of school attendance at the three target grade levels of this project: kindergarten, third grade, and sixth grade. Absence figures for the 1972-73 school year were secured from these records.

The instructional programs included: the *regular classrooms* in which language-handicapped children were intermixed with other children; the *resource rooms* where 24 children went each day for special help; and the self-contained *differentiated staffing rooms* each with 50 language-handicapped children. In all three programs teachers received additional diagnostic support, services of teacher aides, supplementary instructional materials, and specialized inservice education. Language-handicapped children in *control rooms*, where there was no special intervention, were included for research purposes. The resource rooms and control rooms were present at all three grade levels. At the third grade, the regular classrooms and differentiated staffing rooms were also included.

The kindergarten sample contained 60 students equally divided between the two treatments. At the third grade were 123 students included in the four groups; at the sixth grade, 48 students in the two groups. Analysis of variance was computed on a random sample of project students.

Results

Results of the analysis are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE SUMMARY

	SS	df	MS	F	*p*
Kindergarten					
Total	21,705	59	–	–	–
Between groups	756	1	756	2.09	n.s.
Within groups	20,949	58	361	–	–
Third Grade					
Total	9,649	122	–	–	–
Between groups	701	3	234	3.11	.05
Within groups	8,948	119	75	–	–
Sixth Grade					
Total	2,333	47	–	–	–
Between groups	8	1	8	0.15	n.s.
Within groups	2,325	46	51	–	–

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Kindergarten students attended school only half a day. The mean absence for the various programs is presented in Figure 1.

Discussion

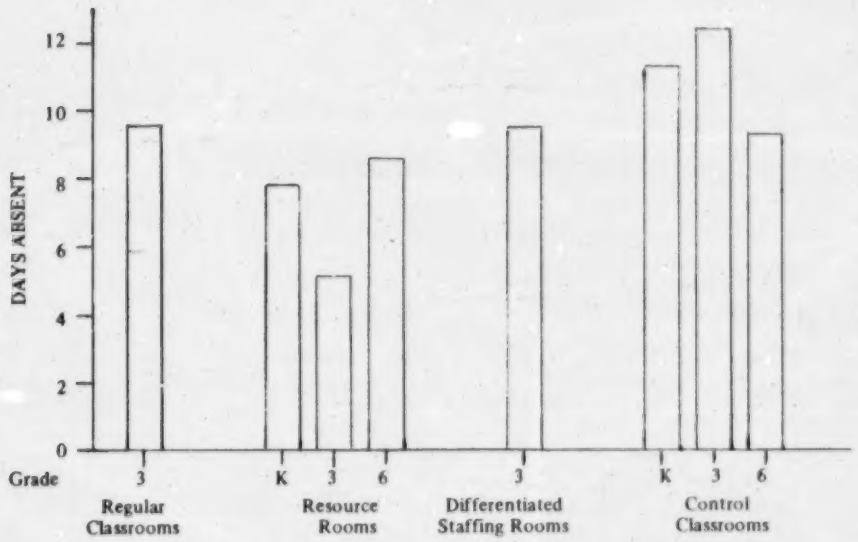
Although it cannot be inferred that special intervention programs were the only factor relating to differences in attendance patterns, the data indicate that those students in special intervention programs did attend school more regularly. At the third grade, the difference was significant at the .05 level. At all three grade levels absences were lowest in the resource room, a different and more individualized learning setting.

At the third grade, where all four experimental treatments occurred, several observations may be made: for the self-contained classroom, regardless of the type of support services available, absence figures were essentially the same. For the self-contained classroom without diagnostic or personnel support, student absence was approximately 31% higher. Students who went to the resource room at least a part of each day, however, exhibited 46% fewer absences.

Conclusions

Third grade intervention programs with diagnostic and personnel support showed significantly fewer student absences. This suggests that special intervention programs may make a difference in student attendance at school.

FIGURE 1
Average Days Absent by Program and Grade Level



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DEMONSTRATION CENTER FOR LANGUAGE-HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

PROFICIENCY PROFILES FOR PROFESSIONALS WHO WORK WITH LANGUAGE-HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

by Ralph O. Teter, Ed. D.

Education is joining other professions, among them medicine and engineering, by instituting competency-based training programs. The Texas Legislature, in fact, has recommended that one alternative to teacher certification be based on the principles of competency-based education. Competency-based education for personnel who serve children with language handicaps appears to be particularly promising.

Competency has a dictionary definition of "properly or well qualified; capable." Competency-based education builds upon a minimum standard. Another term, performance-based education, is often used to emphasize the way in which teachers demonstrate their qualifications and capabilities relating to knowledge and skills. Performance serves to remind us that *knowledge* of content and teaching strategies is an enabler and is of less importance than *using* knowledge in teaching children.

A trend toward accountability is supported by competency-based educational programs since those in training are accountable for demonstrating stipulated competencies; trainers are accountable for designing programs which facilitate development of such competencies. Because these competencies must be demonstrated ultimately in school settings, training should be less college centered than field oriented. Preservice and inservice training represent a continuum along which responsibilities and opportunities are shared by all.

Method

The effort to identify proficiency levels required by various roles that serve language-handicapped children was a task undertaken during the two-and-one-half year period of Language Center operation.

Identification of competency clusters. Information used to identify the various competency clusters came from four different sources. First, the consultants who served The Language Center identified specific areas of competence both through formal presentations and informal conferences with the staff. Second, the Language Center staff identified competencies through observations of and informal meetings with resource teachers, educational diagnosticians, and classroom teachers who were served through inservice. Third was the research of others. Although many studies contributed, two deserve particular note: *Reading Disorders in the United States: Report of the Secretary's (HEW) National Advisory Committee on Dyslexia and Related Reading Disorders (August 1969);* and *Final Report: Advanced Institute for Leadership Personnel in Learning Disabilities (1970).* Fourth was a formal needs assessment conducted among the project personnel three different times--twice the first year and once the second year.

Matrix of competency clusters. The matrix, shown in Figure 1, represents a logical organization of the competency clusters. The first dimension of the matrix, domains of professional competencies, includes four areas: appraisal, educational planning, instruction, and professional development and interaction. The second dimension describes the types of objectives in which competencies may be demonstrated--cognitive and performance (including skills and affective behavior).

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Figure 1

COMPETENCY CLUSTERS

COGNITIVE-BASED OBJECTIVES		PERFORMANCE BASED OBJECTIVES	
		Skills	Affective Behaviors
APPRAISAL	Child development Exceptional children Language development Language-handicapped children Socio-cultural foundations Statistics, measurement, and evaluation.	Observational and interview techniques Test selection, administration, and interpretation	Respect for integrity of information
EDUCATIONAL PLANNING	Objectives and goals Principles of learning Curriculum	Organize learning experiences and resources	Establishment of realistic expectations
INSTRUCTION	Methods of language teaching Instructional strategies	Instruction for mastery Classroom management Materials selection and utilization	Positive attitude
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERACTION	Self appraisal and development Group dynamics	Communication with children Communication with co-workers Organizational procedures	Modeling behaviors

Instrumentation. An instrument was prepared based upon the 26 identified competency clusters. The purpose of this questionnaire was to identify comparative profiles of competencies required to serve language-handicapped children in three different roles: classroom teacher, resource teacher, and educational diagnostician. For each of the competency clusters, the 29 respondents representing these roles were asked to indicate the minimum proficiency level required by each role. The base line was taken to be their perception of the level of proficiency required by classroom teachers who do not teach language-handicapped children.

Results

The results of the study are presented in terms of proficiency profiles and comparisons of proficiencies among the differing roles.

Proficiency profiles. An analysis of the data derived from the questionnaire yielded proficiency profiles for classroom teachers, resource teachers, and educational diagnosticians. These data are presented in Figures 2, 3, 4, and 5. The numbers along the *x*-axis represent the competency clusters coded below each figure. The competency level required for each role is designated on a 0-to-100 scale (*y*-axis) with larger numbers representing higher levels.

Appraisal competencies. In each of the nine areas, the educational diagnostician was perceived as requiring the highest proficiency level; the resource teacher was next, followed by the classroom teacher. "Respect for integrity of information" was viewed as a high level requirement for all three roles.

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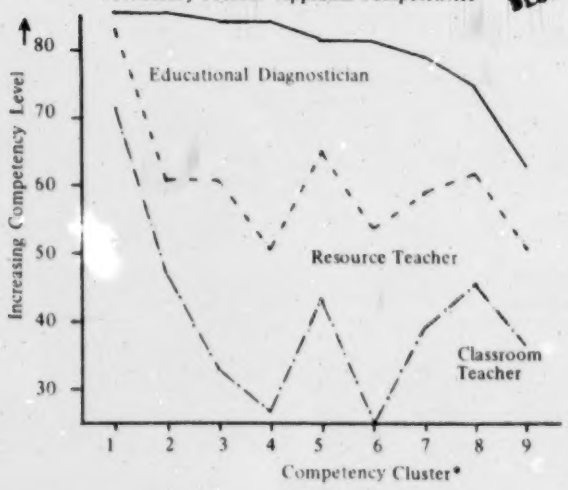
Figure 2
Proficiency Profile: Appraisal Competencies

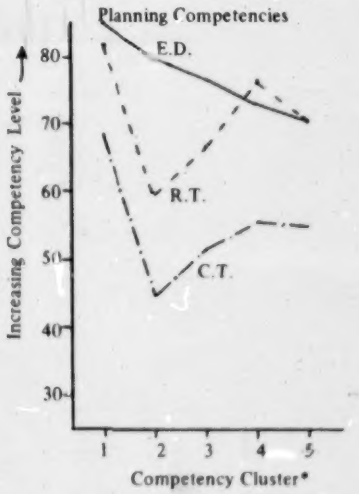


*1. Respect for integrity of information.
2. Knowledge of language-handicapped children.
3. Knowledge of exceptional children.
4. Knowledge of measurement techniques, evaluation procedures, and statistics.
5. Knowledge of language development.
6. Ability to select, administer, and interpret tests.
7. Knowledge of child development.
8. Ability to utilize a variety of observational and interview techniques.
9. Understanding of socio-cultural foundations and their effects on learning.

Educational planning competencies. The competency level perceived for educational diagnosticians was at or near the highest for all areas of educational planning. However, the range, when compared with the classroom teacher, has been greatly reduced. This range compression indicates the need for all three roles to participate in educational planning for a child--this should not be the sole function of one role. It should be noted that the resource teacher who is in direct intensive contact with the language-handicapped child on a daily basis rates highest in general knowledge of curriculum and ability to organize learning experiences and resources.

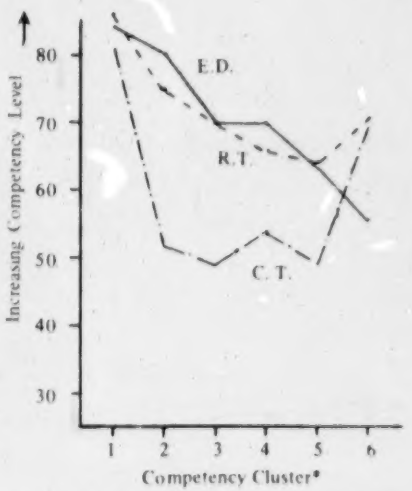
Instructional competencies. An element recognized as central in the teaching of language-handicapped children, the ability to develop and maintain a positive attitude toward learning, was the highest rated competency for all three roles in the twenty fixed competency clusters. Those in direct contact with children, the resource teacher and classroom teacher, were perceived as requiring a high ability to maintain effective classroom management. Resource teachers and educational diagnosticians were identified as requiring high levels of competency in ability to select and utilize a variety of instructional materials. The range between the high and low in other competency clusters was narrow; however, the highest levels were expected for resource teachers.

Figure 3
Proficiency Profile: Educational Planning Competencies



*1. Ability to establish realistic expectations for learners.
2. Ability to develop appropriate instructional goals and objectives for learners.
3. Ability to apply principles of learning in meeting goals and objectives.
4. Ability to organize learning experiences and resources.
5. General knowledge of curriculum.

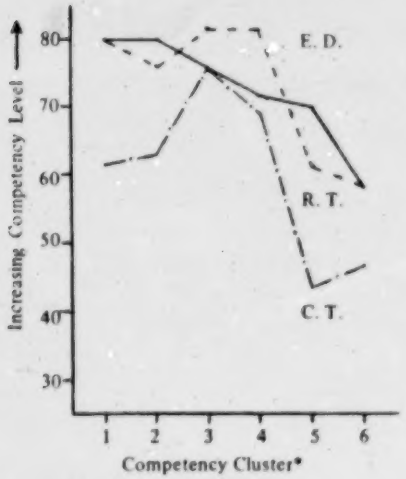
Figure 4
Proficiency Profile: Instructional Competencies



*1. Ability to develop and maintain a positive attitude toward learning among learners.
2. Ability to select and utilize a variety of instructional materials.
3. Knowledge and effective utilization of appropriate methods of language teaching.
4. Ability to apply the concepts of learning for mastery.
5. Knowledge and effective utilization of appropriate instructional strategies.
6. Ability to maintain effective classroom management.

Professional development and personal interaction competencies. High level clusters for all roles centered on ability to communicate and demonstrate suitable modeling behaviors for students; ability to organize work and to communicate with co-workers also received high rankings.

Figure 5
Proficiency Profile: Professional Development and Interaction Competencies



*1. Ability to organize work.
2. Ability to communicate with co-workers.
3. Ability to communicate with children.
4. Possession of suitable modeling behaviors.
5. Ability for self appraisal leading to professional development.
6. Ability to apply the principles of group dynamics.

Comparisons of proficiency profiles. Proficiency profiles were examined using the sign test of profile patterns (Siegel, *Nonparametric Statistics*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1956). Table 1 gives the results of this test.

Table 1
Profile Comparisons

Competency Domain	N	Classroom Teacher X Resource Teacher	Resource Teacher X Educational Diagnostician	Classroom Teacher X Educational Diagnostician
Appraisal	9	.002	.002	.002
Educational Planning	5	.031	--	.031
Instruction	6	.016	--	.016
Professional Development and Interaction	6	.016	--	--

The results indicate a distinctive hierarchy of proficiency required in the appraisal domain with the educational diagnostician at the highest level and the resource teacher next, followed by the classroom teacher. In each domain the resource teacher was perceived as requiring higher proficiency levels than the classroom teacher. Significant results were not noted in other relationships.

Conclusions

Among the six competency clusters perceived as requiring the highest levels of proficiency for each role, three were common to all roles:

- . . Ability for self appraisal leading to professional development
- . . Respect for integrity of information
- . . Ability to establish realistic expectations for learners.

Two clusters were common to both classroom teachers and resource teachers:

- . . Ability to communicate with children
- . . Possession of suitable modeling behaviors

Clusters identified for only one role were:

- . . Ability to maintain effective classroom management (classroom teachers)
- . . Ability to organize work (resource teachers)
- . . Knowledge of language-handicapped children (educational diagnosticians)
- . . Knowledge of measurement techniques, evaluation procedures, and statistics (educational diagnosticians)

While minimum competency levels may be defined for all who serve language-handicapped children, proficiency profiles derived through this study reflect the varied needs of different roles.

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